



**Town of Amherst, NH
Heritage Commission
FINAL MINUTES**

Barbara Landry Conference Room

Thursday, 13 September 2018, 7:30 PM

*Heritage Commission members in attendance were: Will Ludt, Chairman; Lisa Montesanto, and Tom Grella – BOS Ex-Officio.
Alternate Members: John Bement
Staff in attendance included: Simon Corson – Town Planner; Kristan Patenaude.*

I. Call to Order

Chairman Will Ludt called the meeting to order at 7:29 PM.

II. “Throw Back” Thursday – Amherst Heritage

Chairman Ludt explained that he was looking through *A Sleepy Town Awakens* and noting information about the Souhegan Grange. 1973 marked the 100th anniversary of it as an organization, and after that the membership information and documents were sent to Milford. Chairman Ludt visited the Milford Grange to see if he could find any related Amherst documents, but there were only a few recordings of minutes. He was told that the rest of the records had been sent to the state Grange in Concord, but they reported back that there was no data from Amherst there.

III. Potential for New Heritage Commission Member

Chris Simpson introduced himself to the Commission. He grew up in Tyngsboro and moved to Colorado 15 years ago. A couple of years ago, he and his family moved back to the area and settled in Amherst. His love of history comes from a background in metal detecting and an interest in his parents’ 1826 farmhouse in Maine.

Chairman Ludt explained that Mr. John Bement can now be moved to a regular member position, with Chris Simpson filling his spot as an alternate for the Commission.

IV. Demonstration of Stone Wall Mapping Working Group Software (Sponsored by NHDES and NHDHR)

Chairman Ludt explained that, in 2016, NHDHR and NHDES established a working group of 6 volunteers to gather ideas on how to enhance the states use of LiDAR imagery. In 2017 an application was submitted to the NH Charitable Foundation (NHCF) for developing a web-based mapping tool to document the state’s landscape of historic stone

walls. In February 2018, NHDES' Geological Survey Office received a \$14,487 grant from NHCF to fuse LiDAR technology with the goal to preserve heritage. To date in 2018, the group has reviewed the progress of development, commented on Beta versions of the tool, and provided feedback.

The goals of the group are to:

- Create detailed maps of stone walls throughout the state
- Stimulate public fascination with the project
- Fuse LiDAR technology with NH history
- ID, document and validate items – find possible hidden treasures

Chairman Ludt stated that 90% of the work being done in Amherst is on conservation land. The group is currently working with NRPC to try to get some funding for training so that individuals can correctly take on this project. The NHDES working group will continue to meet through the end of the year.

The intents in Amherst are to create a Letter to the Editor seeking volunteers for the project, place a notice in the Community Development newsletter, brief other towns/commissions/organizations, set up training sessions, identify the walls using the imagery technology, and doing walkabouts to verify the locations. Mr. Ludt hopes to section off Amherst by the number of volunteers there are.

In response to a question from Mr. Grella, Mr. Ludt explained that the project will start only on conservation/town land, and then will attempt to venture onto private property, with landowner permission.

Mr. Corson stated that this document could become a state-wide resource for potential development proposals in the future. He believes the Planning Board may be interested in it.

V. Heritage Commission Projects (Updates)

Mr. Ludt explained that the Villagers have donated \$1,000 in order for the Heritage Commission to renovate and restore the Brick School window. A contractor for the project is being sought and estimates will be received shortly.

Mr. Corson stated that his mapping resource is in need for some extra data entry work. He will work to fill in the information and send the resource out to the Commission shortly.

Ms. Montesanto stated that she spoke with Katrina Holman, Amherst town historian, who mentioned being careful in getting the correct research for this resource. Some information out there is not accurate and all data that is unclear should reference the map of 1858.

Mr. Ludt stated that there is one remaining task for the Town vault project, and that is to get a sign for the work done by the Bertha Rogers Trust and put it above the vault.

Mr. Corson stated that a consultant has been chosen for the Historic District survey. When the kick-off for the project happens, the Heritage Commission is welcome to meet with the consultant, along with the Historic District Commission.

79 **VI. Roundtable Discussions**

80 Mr. Ludt explained to the group that Town Administrator O'Mara is departing his position
81 and there will be an open house for him at Town Hall on September 27th from 4-6 p.m. He
82 also stated that Mr. Eric Hahn has been named Director of DPW. Also, next Wednesday
83 the Planning Board will be meeting to discuss the Master Plan; he would like for a
84 representative of the Commission to be there.

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86 Mr. Grella thanked Mr. Ludt for his work on the bookcase now housed in the Town Hall
87 for historic Town documents.

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89 **VII. Minutes Approval – 9 August 2018**

90 *A MOTION was made by Ms. Montesanto and SECONDED by Mr. Bement to approve the*
91 *meeting minutes from August 9, 2018 as written.*
92 *Voting: 3 ayes, 1 abstention; motion carried.*
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94 **VIII. Adjourn**

95 *Mr. Ludt adjourned the meeting at 8:21 p.m.*
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104 *Respectfully submitted,*
105 *Kristan Patenaude*
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